

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8100

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

S E C R E T RANGOON 1600

EXDIS

DEPT FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL

BANGKOK FOR AMBASSADOR KINTNER

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PFOR, ASEC, MASS, SNAR, TH, BM, US

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS EQUIPMENT OFFER

REF: BANGKOK 9523

1. PAST GUB PERFORMANCE, FOR EXAMPLE THE RECOGNIZED EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR RECENT OPERATIONS AGAINST NARCOTICS CARAVANS, DEMONSTRATES THE MOTIVATION AND COMMITMENT OF GUB IN ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT. EXAMINATION OF THE PATTERN OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS INVOLVED CERTAINLY SUPPORTS THE INFERENCE THAT HELICOPTERS WOULD BE MOST USEFUL IN FURTHER UPGRADING GUB OPERATIONS IN THAT FIELD. I HAVE FOUND THAT THE GREATER DETAIL IN WHICH ONE EXAMINES THIS PATTERN, THE MORE CLEARLY ONE SEES THE RELEVANCE AND UTILITY OF HELICOPTERS TO OUR COMPELLING NATIONAL INTEREST IN SUPPRESSING THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC.

2. THERE IS THUS A VERY SOUND BASIS (WHICH COULD BE ELABORATED AT LENGTH, IF THERE WERE REALLY ANY POINT IN DOING SO) FOR GOING THROUGH WITH THE EQUIPMENT OFFER, UNLESS THERE ARE EVEN MORE COMPELLING NATIONAL-INTEREST

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ARGUMENTS AGAINST DOING SO. AND SUCH COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY COMPELLING INDEED, TO JUSTIFY
RENEGING ON A FORMAL COMMITMENT AT THIS STAGE.

3. AS TO THE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES THAT CHIANG MAI EXPECTS
TO FLOW FROM IMPLEMENTING THE NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION
EQUIPMENT OFFER, I FIND IT HARD TO COMMENT FROM HERE. THEY
PERTAIN MOSTLY TO THE THAI SIDE OF THE BORDER. IN ADDITION,
QUITE FRANKLY, THEY SEEM SO VASTLY OVERSTATED IT IS HARD
TO KNOW WHICH OF THEM HAVE ENOUGH CHANCE OF BEING TAKEN
SERIOUSLY TO BE WORTH REBUTTING. WE WOULD ACCORDINGLY
WELCOME GUIDANCE AS TO WHICH OF THEM WE SHOULD TAKE A
CRACK AT FIRST. IF EITHER ADDRESSEE, ON THE OTHER HAND,
WOULD LIKE OUR COMMENTS ON THE WHOLE LOT, WE WILL BE GLAD
TO OBLIGE.

4. NOT WITH ANY INTENT OF SHYING AWAY FROM A DEBATE,
WHICH, AS BOTH OF YOU KNOW, I ENJOY, BUT WITH A HOPE OF
GIVING THE DEPARTMENT THE MOST BALANCED AND FINEST-HONED
JUDGMENTS POSSIBLE, I REPEAT A SUGGESTION MADE EARLIER
IN THIS SAME CONTEXT: THAT THE TWO EMBASSIES TRY TO IMPROVE
OUR PRIOR COORDINATION IN SUCH MATTERS.

OSBORN

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